

Eighth Polish Conference on Analytical Chemistry

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The Polish Conference on Analytical Chemistry has a long and rich history. The first such scientific forum took place in Warsaw in 1981. Since 1995, Polish analysts have had a chance to meet every 5 years in Gdańsk, Gliwice, Toruń, and—in 2010—in Kraków.

The VIIIth Polish Conference on Analytical Chemistry was held on July 4–9. It was organized by the Department of Analytical Chemistry, Jagiellonian University, in cooperation with the Polish Committee of Analytical Chemistry of the Polish Academy of Sciences. The meeting attracted 570 participants, who presented their works in the Auditorium Maximum—the main conference center in Kraków.

The conference was opened by Adam Hulanicki—a famous and distinguished scientist, and a patron and tutor to several generations of Polish analysts. In his lecture, he recounted the history of Polish analytical conferences, including many interesting and little-known details. Another impressive presentation was given by a special guest of the conference—Georges Guiochon from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, USA, who is a specialist in chromatographic analysis. He acquainted listeners with the latest developments in this analytical domain, placing emphasis on methodological and instrumental advances.

The regular scientific program of the conference encompassed several plenary lectures, as well as oral and poster sessions. Eminent Polish scientists, working mostly in foreign research centers, were invited to deliver

the plenary lectures. They were Anna Brajter-Toth (University of Florida, USA), Ewa Cukrowska (University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa), Paweł Ciborowski (University of Nebraska, USA), Tadeusz Górecki (University of Waterloo, Canada), Andrzej Lewenstam (Abo Akademi University, Finland), Ryszard Łobiński (National Center for Scientific Research, France), and Marek Trojanowicz (Warsaw University, Poland). In their fascinating speeches, they outlined the current state and future directions of different analytical fields, providing a broad overview of the progress in modern analytical chemistry.

The oral and poster presentations were given in 12 separate topical sessions, encompassing all the main analytical domains. A unique feature of this conference was a session titled “Criminalistic Analytics” reflecting the strong scientific collaboration between two Cracovian centers: Jagiellonian University and the Institute of Forensic Research. Another session was devoted to the Symposium on Flow Analysis, which has traditionally been organized in Kraków—for the seventh time in 2010.

The thematic sessions revealed that Polish analytical chemistry is developing systematically in terms of methodological, instrumental, and applicative aspects, which are being introduced into all branches of our lives. Protection of human health, the environment, and cultural heritage is still of great importance to Polish analysts. Owing to the creation and application of analytical procedures, methods, and instruments of increasing sophistication, it has become possible to identify and determine ever-decreasing amounts of analytes in various forms and of various levels of threat to our environment. Novel techniques for preparation of biological samples together with chromatographic and electrophoretic separation systems and with mass spectrometry as a detection system have opened up new analytical

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possibilities in clinical, pharmaceutical, and forensic toxicology. The growing interest in exploitation of nondestructive analytical methods, flow techniques, and integrated and miniaturized instrumental systems for different purposes is also worth mentioning. All the above is evidence that analytical chemistry is increasingly being introduced into our everyday lives, helping to make them healthier, safer, and more comfortable. The papers presented in this special issue of *Analytical and Bioanalytical Chemistry* are representative of the discussion of this tendency at the conference.

In addition to the scientific program, there was a wide range of social activities. A Chopin concert, which was held in the courtyard of Wawel Royal Castle, made a great impression on listeners. The conference banquet took place in one of the halls of the Wieliczka Salt Mine, situated within the Kraków metropolitan area—the mining company is believed to be the world's 14th oldest company still in operation today. During the meeting in Zalesie Inn, guests experienced the atmosphere, folklore, and food of the Cracovian region. Finally, all attendees were invited to sightsee Kraków. First on the list was, of course, the Old Town, with the largest mediaeval market square in Europe—the colorful and crowded Main Market with its pigeons and florists and assorted market stalls. Mariacki Church, from the highest tower of which a bugle-call is sounded every hour, and the museum of the famous Jagiellonian University—Alma Mater Cracoviensis—were also visited.

The next Polish Conference on Analytical Chemistry will be held in Poznań in 2015.

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